DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 183 219 IR 008 197

AUTHOR Ardito, Stephanie
TITLE Advocacy and Information: Research Issues and Practice.
PUB DATE 27 Nov 79
NOTE 39p.; Paper presented at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society (32nd, Washington, DC, November 27, 1979)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Change Agents; Gerontology; *Information Needs; *Information Services; Librarians; *Library Role; Library Services; *Older Adults; Opinions; *Social Change; Surveys
IDENTIFIERS *Information and Referral Services

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the view that information specialists and librarians do little to promote change in the status of the elderly in society, that the profession lacks determination and risk-taking even though it has the expertise to access information for social change. Controversy among information professionals regarding personalized service to the elderly is detected, and political implications and value judgments are seen as major factors in determining valid information service. The failure of information specialists to go beyond narrowly defined linkages of people with services and to assist the elderly in decision-support information for advocacy purposes is criticized. A literature review demonstrates this lack of advocacy responsibility in the information profession, as do the results of a survey of information specialists on their views of advocacy. A bibliography is provided. (Author/FM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED183219

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ADVOCACY AND INFORMATION: RESEARCH ISSUES AND PRACTICE

Presented at the 32nd Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society, Washington, D.C., November 27, 1979

STEPHANIE ARDITO

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Stephanie C. Ardito

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Syracuse University
Gerontological Information Program
All-University Gerontology Center
Brockway Hall
Syracuse, New York 13210

IR008197

ABSTRACT

Information specialists/librarians do little to promote change in the status of the elderly in society. Although the profession has the expertise to access information for social change, it lacks determination and risk-taking. Personalized service to the elderly, in which human attachments endanger objective information provision, is controversial among information professionals. Political implications and value judgments can be major factors in determining valid information service. Although there have been efforts to develop information and referral services and community analysis programs, advocacy remains narrowly defined as the linking of people with services. Information specialists/librarians do not go beyond this linkage mechanism to assist the elderly in decision-support information for advocacy purposes. A review of the literature, both research findings and practice experience, will demonstrate the lack of advocacy responsibility in the information profession. The identification of appropriate advocacy roles and areas for needed research, and the results of a preliminary study of several national information centers/libraries will reveal new advocacy perspectives for information specialists.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....i

ADVOCACY AND INFORMATION: RESEARCH ISSUES AND PRACTICE....1

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....9

APPENDIX.....12

RESULTS OF STUDY.....13

Advocacy and Information Questionnaire.....13
Description of Respondents.....13
Summary of Responses.....15
Defining Advocacy.....15
Courses and/or Continuing Education Programs...18
Outreach Programs and/or Advocacy Activities in the Community.....18
Research Projects.....19
Future of Advocacy Roles.....21

LITERATURE REVIEW.....24

Definitions.....24
Information and Referral.....24
Advocacy.....24
Advocacy Roles - Traditional.....26
Advocacy Roles - Present and Future.....26
National Advocacy Organizations.....27

ADVOCACY AND INFORMATION: RESEARCH ISSUES AND PRACTICE

For almost twenty years, the literature has stressed libraries' responsibilities in terms of education, information, recreation, and culture. Although consciousness has been raised in librarians to recognize the importance of liaisons with community organizations, and although there have been efforts to develop information and referral services and community analysis programs, the trend for most types of libraries has been to program for institutionalized or home-bound elderly. Services have been traditional, with major spending of money on large print materials and with heavy programming in nursing homes where only two to five percent of the elderly can be reached. (Dosa and Ardito-Kirkland, 1978, p. 24)

The late 1960's and early 1970's generated renewed reflections on the responsibilities of libraries and their relationships with other agencies. Lacy and Mathews (1967) defined five responsibilities for libraries in terms of education: (1) support of formal education, from kindergarten through graduate and professional schools; (2) facilitation of the increasingly complex operations of the Government and the economy of the country; (3) provision of opportunities for continuing self-education and retraining; (4) responsibility in the societal reintegration of groups now largely isolated and excluded by their lacks in education and training; and (5) provision of resources for an informed public opinion and for personal cultural and intellectual growth and individuation. Recognizing that paperback books, news magazines, television, and scientific and technical research were becoming more widespread, Lacy and Mathews emphasized the need for libraries to develop outreach services that would specifically encompass adult education and literacy programs.

Bloss (1969) and Frost (1967) further addressed the problem of traditional library services by studying the conditions characteristic of the disadvanged population. They found that the disadvantaged "treat libraries with apathy and ignorance, not with enthusiasm". Support systems and structures were not valued, as they seemed to deny participation and to contribute to degradation of the poor in numerous ways. Frost went so far as to state that "misinformation may be the rule rather than the exception for the disadvantaged". In addition to more outreach services, both authors recommended the utilization of people-oriented librarians - with traits of sensitivity, empathy, and perception - in addition to cataloguers, reference librarians, book selectors, and readers' advisors. The person-oriented libarian would then have an advantage in better understanding community organization concepts and establishing himself/herself as an "interdisciplinary mediator among the array of social agencies...."

A study, funded by the National Advisory Commission on Libraries in 1967, also raised questions of personalized approaches and community involvement by focussing in on the traditional services of public libraries:

> "Library services and programs which have won response from poor neighborhoods are characterized by aggressive, inventive highly flexible and personalized approaches to individuals within the disadvantaged community.... The libraries which succeeded in reaching non-users... recognized that effective service requires community-directed action as an agency that is ready and eager to reshape its program to the needs of the client, rather than trying to fit the clients into existing program patterns.
>
> "...it is more essential now than perhaps at any previous time for librarians to decide whether the public library as an institution will, in the years ahead, be an active or a passive force for public enlightenment and social change."

Mendelsohn and Wingerd (1967) summarized the trends of library services

of their time perfectly: services libraries do worst at are reaching minority groups and the disadvantaged and providing community cultural and adult education services.

As endless, theoretical questions about the user, in general, perpetrated the literature, a few innovative librarians took the initiative and actually developed services for a specific group of people: the elderly. In 1971, the Cleveland Public Library conducted a first-of-its-kind National Study "to determine the scope of library service rendered to persons over 65 by public libraries and libraries at state and federal institutions". When Mendelsohn and Wingerd reviewed the literature in 1967, they found that as people grow older, they tended to use libraries less. The Cleveland Study provided additional facts:

(1) About two-thirds of public library services to the aging involve extension of services to users. (p. 75)

(2) Group programs account for about one-fourth of public library services to the aging. (p. 77)

(3) Circulation of special materials accounts for the smallest volume of services offered to the aging by public libraries. (p. 79)

(4) Geographic distribution of library services does not correspond closely with the distribution of the 65+ population. (p. 80)

(5) Over half of the public libraries offering services to the aging are located in urban areas. (p. 84)

(6) Although all types of service appear to be in short supply, unmet demand for extension services is greatest. (p. 87)

(7) State library agencies and public libraries ranked the older population lowest on its priority for program development. (pp. 100, 140)

Major recommendations of the National Study emphasized "special recognition of the aging in library legislation and organization, coordination of services to [the] aging as a discrete program of library agencies". (p. 3)

In the same year (1971), Genevieve Casey reported on principles for planning library services to the aging, developed during a one-week institute sponsored by Wayne State's Department of Library Science in 1969. The fourth principle stated: "The library should draw the community's attention to the need to define a role for the aging in society, and should aid aging individuals in finding creative and satisfying roles for themselves." (pp. 1000-1001)

It is remarkable, considering the voluminous literature urging change, that a decade later librarians continue to define themselves in terms of traditional roles. The biggest controversy surrounding this issue of change seems to be the political implications and personal value judgments in both what constitutes valid library service and whom this service should reach. The profession is split in defining "appropriate services". Some feel that "appropriate service" is providing objective programs, while others feel that personal interest may be the only avenue to get persons information. The core of the problem, or underlying question, is how to establish needed services as basic services offered continuously.

The word "advocacy" is a source of trouble and anxiety for most of us in the library/information profession. In editing a special issue of Drexel Library Quarterly on "Information and Referral Services in the Public Library" (1976), Miriam Braverman, in her introduction, best summarizes the concept of advocacy and how the profession generally views it:

> "It is...notable that one would have to search diligently to find the word advocacy [in this issue], while the essence of advocacy is implied or stated throughout. Perhaps this is an indication that we have passed beyond specious arguments on terminology and are addressing ourselves to the essence with which advocacy is concerned - an understanding of the nature and role of information for human needs

in our society and the effective provision of the information to the persons or groups who need it, thus increasing their power and control over events, whether it is the power of an individual over his own life, or the power of a community over its own priorities and direction." (p. 2)

Within this same issue, Williams and Dunatov (1976, pp. 110-138) describe Information London, the information and referral service of London, Ontario, in Canada, and are not so generous with the American stance on advocacy:

"Information London...is unique in many respects. It is a computerized general community information and referral service; in addition, it provides a consumer complaint and advocacy service (a role shunned thus far by its more timid American cousins). The "Discredit Bureau", as John Carroll has called it, although not directly government developed, provides feedback to government on consumer concerns and furnishes composite information on specific consumer complaints from all of the voluntary agencies which cooperate with it in channeling consumer concerns." (Note: Information London has been in operation since 1972 and was set up by information professionals.)

Information and referral work is only part of what constitutes advocacy. Croneberger and Luck (1975) treat the information and referral concept in terms of their own definition of advocacy:

"Information and referral is the active process of linking a person with a need or problem with a service which will meet the need or solve the problem. The link between the person and the service is made up of information. It is because the success or failure of the information link depends on communication involving specific individuals in specific problem situations, that we emphasize that information and referral is a process and not a product...(directory, card file, computer print out).... [It] is the effective communication of information to help people solve problems and to get services they need, creating the link between problem and solution, need and resource.

"Advocacy has become a dirty word with frightening connotations of politics, struggle, and sacrifice, and many people in libraries choose to avoid it at all costs, devising other, more acceptable terms to apply to what they think might be misconstrued as advocacy. Others choose to apply the term to a variety of phenomena precisely because it is a dirty word, guaranteed to evoke some response from everyone.

"In some cases it may be necessary for the information and re-

ferral worker to intervene more directly between the patron and the agency...to help people get information and services which they are unable to get on their own.... The appropriate role when such intervention is called for is that of an interpreter...; advocacy is as good a term as any...for this type of interpretation/intervention.... Our definition of advocacy, then, is: helping a person to get information or services which he cannot get for himself. Then by definition, information and referral is advocacy which may require varying levels of interpretation and intervention. We think this kind of advocacy is needed, appreciated, and safe." (pp. 1985-1986)

Owens and Braverman had outlined a similar approach to advocacy a year earlier (1974). They discuss the advocate/information counselor who provides objective information which...creates options and sets the stage for meaningful decision-making...." (p. 15) By assisting groups or individuals in helping themselves "instead of serving as advocates for them...library personnel are not thrown into direct confrontations with other government agencies; the offending agency is instead confronted by the individual or group served by the library." (pp. 68-70) Owens and Braverman label this "activist librarianship", but the method does not always work. A person or group may change their minds about getting involved in decision-making, even if they are loaded with the "right" information, or may become frustrated by an agency's restrictive policy or uncaring or inadequately trained staff.

The Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies (1971) defines advocacy as "embracing or espousing a cause and/or pleading in another person's defense. Advocacy in an information and referral (I & R) center for the elderly has a more specific meaning. It means to work and plead on behalf of older people for services that are now non-existent or unavailable to them. In assuming advocacy as one of its functions, the center may: "press an older individual's case with another agency, press an agency for changes in its policies and

procedures on behalf of older persons using the agency, press for changes in public policy on behalf of all older people in the community." (p. 4) The Institute suggests care, tact, and purpose in assuming advocacy roles and points out that "There are constraints, limitations, and risks. Not every issue is worth a fight....Choose issues, tactics, and strategies that are likely to yield the largest payoffs....You are a linkage mechanism providing information - do not become a complaint mechanism."

As advocates for the elderly, we can encompass the goals of the Administration on Aging - the nation's designated advocate for older people and Federal focal point for their needs and concerns - by actively standing against negative stereotypes and ageism and seeing that older persons with urgent needs receive supportive services to maintain themselves in their homes and communities. To this end, an information advocate can assume many responsibilities:

(1) Speak before and work with community groups; promote community involvement

(2) Write letters to the editor, Congresspersons, and the President

(3) Testify before official bodies

(4) Reduce stereotyped images of the elderly by cooperating with local and national advocacy organizations, such as Gray Panthers, American Association of Retired Persons/National Retired Teachers Association, National Council of Senior Citizens, etc.

(5) Act as professional organizers, i.e. identify leadership in training, do research on issues, assist with planning and in evaluating advocacy activities with seniors

(6) Provide information to the elderly and information about the elderly

(7) Become ombudsmen by facilitating the dissemination of information on specific nursing homes to allow families and potential patients to make informed decisions

(8) Contribute to the design of formal and informal helping networks

(9) Translate the languages of both researcher and practitioner

(10) Plan and act for the primary goal of social change for the elderly

These concepts are not easy ones for the librarian/information specialist to digest or accept. Although the profession may be providing high quality services, they may be doing litte, or nothing, to promote change in the states of the elderly in society. As mentioned above, this requires expertise, determination, and risk-taking. Hope Sabin Bagger (1975) suggests that "All the elderly need now is enough information about the conditions that exist and how to go about exerting their influence most effectively. Equipped with this knowledge and understanding of the situation, added to their determination to find ways to change as much as can be changed of the conditions they realize are wrong and harmful, they can become invaluable as activists for the older generation."

There is a great need for further research into the issue of advocacy and information. The controversary surrounding what constitutes "good" information provision will be compounded by problems of humanizing computer-based information systems with the elderly as a new group of computer uses or clients (Hicks, 1976) and by problems of inadequate financial resources to pay for information services that in all likelihood will be sophosticated and expensive in the 1980's. Most importantly, as keepers of information, we must reexamine our traditional roles and actively facilitate the means by which the powerless can have control over their own human condition.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bagger, Hope Sabin. "A Study program for the elderly and friends of the elderly--an interdisciplinary approach to help make deomcracy work for old people". Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Gray Panthers, 1975.

Bloss, Meredith. "A Report on New Haven's library neighborhood centers". New Haven, Connecticut: New Haven Free Public Library, 1969. (ED 032073)

Braverman, Miriam, issue editor. "Information and referral services in the public library", Drexel Library Quarterly, volume 12, numbers 1 and 2, January - April 1976.

Brody, Elaine M. and Stanley J. "Decade of decision for the elderly", Social Work, volume 19, number 5, September 1974, pages 544-554.

Casey, Genevieve M. "Public library service to the aging", American Libraries, October 1971, pages 999-1004.

Cleveland Public Library. National survey of library services to the aging. Final report. Washington, D.C.: Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Bureau of Libraries and Educational Technology, 1971. (ED 067521)

Croneberger, Robert and Carolyn Luck. "Defining information referral service", Library Journal, volume 100, number 19, November 1, 1975, pages 1984-1987.

Dosa, Marta L. and Stephanie Ardito-Kirkland. Information in social gerontology. Syracuse, New York: ERIC Clearinghouse on Information Resources, 1978.

Frost, Joe L. "Educational media and the inhuman condition". Washington, D.C.: Educational Media Council, Inc., 1967. (ED 015220)

Gill, Philip. "Fresh avenues or dead ends? Librarianship in the eighties", An Leabharlann. The Irish Library, volume 6, numbers 3/4, Autumn/Winter 1977, pages 94, 96, 98, 100, 102.

Hameister, Dennis R. "Conceptual model for the library's service to the elderly", Educational Gerontology, July 1976, volume 1, number 3, pages 279-284.

Hicks, Bruce. "Computer outreach". Arlington, Virginia: ERIC Document Reproduction Service, 1976. (ED 138293)

Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies. "Information and referral services--follow up; working draft". Minneapolis, Minnesota: American Rehabilitation Foundation, 1971. (ED 055637)

_____. "Information and referral services--the role of advocacy; working draft". Minneapolis, Minnesota: American Rehabilitation Foundation, 1971. (ED 055639)

Lacy, Dan and Virginia H. Mathews. Social change and the library, 1945-1980. Final report to the National Advisory Commission on Libraries. Washington, D.C.: National Advisory Commission on Libraries; New York, New York: National Book Committee, Inc., 1967. (ED 022483)

McDowell, Donna. The New older citizen's guide--advocacy and action. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Office for the Aging, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, 1977.

Mendelsohn, Harold and Karen Wingerd. The Use of libraries and the conditions that promote their use. A report to the National Advisory Commission on Libraries. New York, New York: Academy for Educational Development, Inc.; Denver, Colorado: Denver University, Colorado Communication Arts Center; Washington, D.C.: National Advisory Commission on Libraries, 1967. (ED 022489)

National Advisory Commission on Libraries. "Public libraries in the United States--trends, problems and recommendations. A report prepared for the National Advisory Commission on Libraries". Washington, D.C.: National Advisory Commission on Libraries; New York, New York: Nelson Associates, Inc., 1967. (ED 022484)

New York State Library. "Conference on library participation in antipoverty programs (West Point, New York, February 7-9, 1966)". Albany, New York, 1966. (ED 022510)

Owens, Major R. and Miriam Braverman. "The Public library and advocacy--information for survival. Commissioned Papers Project, Teachers College, No. 5". New York, New York: Columbia University, Teachers College, 1974. (Ed 098991)

Oyer, Herbert J. and E. Jane. Aging and communication. Baltimore, Maryland: University Park Press, 1976.

Tavani, Cleonice. "Meeting the needs of the oldest of the old", Aging, numbers 291-292, January-February 1979.

University of California. Innovative developments in aging directory. Second printing. San Francisco, California: PROJECT IDEA, 1978.

Williams, Martha E. and Elaine Tisch Dunatov. "Data bases for coping with human needs", Drexel Library Quarterly, volume 12, numbers 1 and 2, January-April 1976, pages 110-138.

"Working together for action--a project in self advocacy for the aging". Syracuse, New York: University College and All-University Gerontology Center, 1976.

APPENDIX

(The following display is a summary of the literature review and results of a questionnaire to information specialists/librarians on their views of advocacy.)

RESULTS OF STUDY

Advocacy and Information Questionnaire:

1. How do you define advocacy in terms of the information/ librarianship profession? For example, do you see advocacy in terms of a) providing information and referral services; b) providing community assessments and outreach services; c) affecting decision-making on the local, state, and national levels; and/or d) accessing information for social change?

2. Does your institution offer courses for students or continuing education programs for professionals that prepare or train them for advocacy roles? If so, would you briefly describe these courses or send available materials?

3. Is your institution involved in outreach programs and/or does it provide information services for advocacy-related activities in the community? If so, would you briefly describe these services or send available materials?

4. Is your institution involved in any research projects to study the identification of appropriate advocacy roles for information specialists/librarians? If so, would you briefly describe these projects or send available materials?

5. How do you see the future of advocacy roles for the information/ library profession?

Description of Respondents:

	number of responses
24 faculty members in 23 library and information science schools	13
information specialists in 14 gerontology centers	5
information specialists/librarians in 4 national organizations for the elderly	2
research specialists in 3 colleges	1
librarians in 2 public libraries	1
faculty member in 1 communications school	1
1 information broker	1
librarian in 1 national library organization	no response

librarian in 1 state library	no response
librarian in 1 library system	no response

A total of 52 questionnaires were distributed:

24 responses	46% return rate
28 no responses	54% unreturned

Summary of Responses:

1. Defining Advocacy

"...following-up on referrals of patrons to social service and other community agencies, organizations, and/or professions (such as attorneys, doctors, etc.)."

"...making available to an individual information on the various options open to solve his/her problem, and, once the choice of option is made by the individual, aiding in the follow-through. Advocacy for groups consists in making available to them information to aid in their efforts to serve their populations, e.g. informing a community organization of the court decision in Detroit returning some millions of dollars in utility over-charges."

Information and Referral
and
Follow-up to Referrals

"There are two major modes: advocacy for the individual in need and advocating for a whole class or group. These can take place on local, state or national levels, although most advocacy for individuals is seen as a local level matter...."

"Advocacy is the act of encouraging the use of various library/information services for specific purposes or for desired goals. It will vary depending upon the center and issues. The great danger is overlooking all aspects of a problem because of too great an involvement on one side."

"Advocacy is working for people; for an end. Advocacy is providing information (knowledge about how to find information, knowledge about how to use information). Advocacy is providing outreach services. Advocacy is providing an outlet for information, i.e. networking, bulletin boards, etc. Advocacy is working 'both sides of the street'; in communities often factions exist within a community but the needs are the same for total group."

"The information specialist's role...of an advocate who, by providing access to necessary information for the field, supplies a service that can lead to social change."

Making Information Available
To Individuals and Groups

"A fearless approach/attitude to collecting and synthesizing the literature - including popular and non-traditional literature. A pro-active approach - including information to those who have not asked for it directly."

"The professional librarian plays an advocacy role through provision of easy access to information - to those who need it, not just those who seek it. Therefore, the librarian/information manager must educate his/her clients and potential clients as to their information needs and the available resources."

Making Information Available To Individuals and Groups

"...advocacy is promoting the goals and interests of aging information to whomever will benefit from it."

"...support for those working as more direct advocates, where information retrieval systems are available for their needs."

"Advocacy...is a matter of awareness, conscious choices on part of the information practitioners and the degree of intensity in information delivery."

"Advocacy is when the practitioner does more than give information, i.e. helping individual think something through, intervening in system, etc."

"There are times when strict neutrality (the 'classic' librarian's position) is not helpful to the library or librarian, and especially to the patron. At such times advocacy, the marshalling of the librarian's resources on behalf of a client, is, if not necessary, then at least desirable."

Taking a Position/Making a Commitment

"The librarian/information specialist advocate can effect change over situations which the client is helpless to control. While the political realities of many positions make this difficult,...it can and should be done much more often than it is."

"Advocacy implies a commitment to particular activities or programs. One advocates something in the common sense meaning of that term. To say one is 'an advocate for older persons' doesn't mean anything in particular."

"The idea of advocacy is inextricably tied into questions of control and power. Individuals or groups who are lacking control over their lives, or who have no power to stop incursions by others into their lives, are the focus of advocacy efforts. [As] enablers, [advocates facilitate] the spread of power and decisionmaking among different parts of the community."

Taking a Position/Making a Commitment

23

24

2. Courses and/or Continuing Education Programs (Note: Advocacy is touched upon in the following courses. Questionnaires and literature review did not indicate that an entire course is devoted to the issue of advocacy and information anywhere.)

Community Power Structure Research: "...designed to help local residents use public records to analyze what lies behind local community decisionmaking. These skills would, for example, allow local residents to identify what conflicts of interest lie behind a decision to make residential property commercial"; one week workshop complete with training materials.

-Resources for Community Alternatives
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Community Programming and Advocacy with the Elderly: Continuing Education workshop. "...examined 'programs serving the elderly, focusing on interagency cooperation and advocacy. Particular emphasis...given the roles of the elderly as advocates and recipients, legislation affecting community programming, and the potential for interagency cooperation in planning and service delivery'."

-Institute on Aging, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

Computer Applications for Social Scientists

-School of Information Studies, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York

Gerontology Librarianship

-Graduate School of Library Studies, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii

Information Consultant, Learning Advocate and Communications Mediator

-School of Library and Information Science, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Others (offered through many schools)

Independent Study
Information and Referral Services
Legislative and Policy-making Process
Library and Information Services to Special Groups

3. Outreach Programs and/or Advocacy Activities in the Community

"Coordination of a model project to train peer health advocates in...Housing Authority apartment buildings for the elderly."

-Institute on Aging, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

"The best 'advocacy-oriented' professionals interact with the School after their graduation and both 'give' and 'take' ideas and methods as they continue to grow professionally. Therefore, a School has an outreach impact far beyond its formal programs and services."

-School of Information Studies Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York

"Advocacy information services...."

-Resources for Community Alternatives Santa Fe, New Mexico

"The...OARS (Older Americans Resources Services) program is advocacy-related (also policy relevant). ...Geriatric Evaluation, Treatment and Family Service Clinic is a major source of information and referral in the country."

-Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina

"Information on housing, nursing homes, legislation, community agencies. Librarians are active on many community committees, boards, etc."

-Monroe County-Rochester Public Library, Rochester, New York

"...a resource person...assists the community in policy formulation and strategy...."

-Institute of Gerontology, Wayne State University-University of Michigan, Detroit, Michigan

"...a search service on a cost recovery basis for access to on-line bibliographic data bases."

-School of Library and Information Science, University of Missouri-Columbia, Missouri

4. Research Projects

"...the premise of the research is that all information delivery involves at least involvement in an individual's thinking processes."

-Brenda Dervin, School of Communications, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

"...state-of-the-art investigation."

-several schools

"...exploring the commitment to advocacy among service librarians."

-Professor Peter Reenan, School of Library Science, Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts (abstract of research available)

5. Future of Advocacy Roles

"I do not expect to see librarians extensively involved in individual advocacy outside the I & R model. I expect I & R to foster librarians' function in individual (case) advocacy when the I & R is subject or problem focussed, allowing librarians to become truly knowledgeable and competent judges of need and solution. Class advocacy is well on the way to becoming a respectable function for public and school libraries."

"I personally do not see much in the way of a role in advocacy relating to social issues for the library/information profession. 'Advocacy' by its very nature means taking a stand (as opposed to merely developing information about the issue) and it is highly unlikely that any public agency, particularly with severe budgetary constraints, will be able to take an active stand on political and social issues. There is a greater likelihood that libraries developing an information and referral system might develop advocacy in the form of following up referrals to be sure that clients received the service to which they were entitled, however." — Information and Referral

---

"Due to accelerating increases in 'information', especially in a broad field such as gerontology, the librarian/information manager will...assume more and more responsibility for evaluation and selection of appropriate literature or information sources for the seeker of information, whether researcher, administrator/policy maker, practitioner, or individual citizen. This responsibility, and implied power, behooves the professional librarian to be both able and willing to make judments as to the relative worth/appropriateness of the materials which he/she deals." — Information Provision

---

"I believe this will receive more attention in the future, particularly in the content of information brokering or what is sometimes called free lance librarianship." — Information Brokering

---

"I would like to see training for advocacy become a part of on-going library education, but I think it must begin with the faculty. Many think that this is not the role of the librarian/information specialist and others, I think, just have not given it much thought. Unfortunately, there seems to be little time for this kind of discussion."

"Advocacy is most comprehensive knowledge of need and possible solutions. Libraries need to have training in community and information sciences....Librarians and library staff should become active individuals as well as 'agency' reps."

"First we must acknowledge that there is a role and that it is an appropriate one for information/library personnel. Second - we must address the issue of ethics as it affects the collection and communication of information. I believe there is no future for the advocacy role until we have professional education programs totally unlike those in most library schools. An information curriculum must address advocacy, ethics, decision/policy making, mass communication, etc. We are a long way from having the base of knowledge or the pool of talent needed."

Training and Education

"To be continued as a support system and also in promoting workshop or other outreach activities that library staff could be directly involved in that would fulfill the more active advocacy role."

"The importance of the advocacy role in our profession in the present special-interest-oriented society cannot be overemphasized."

"...the profession will become advocates because of many of the considerations that accompany competition for scarce resources - As dollars become scarcer and scarcer, information/library professionals will assume advocacy roles."

Political and Societal Pressures

30

31

"I feel that the role that the library plays in advocacy will be determined by the goals, policies and objectives of the parent organization."

"I would like to see the world of aging information recognized for its value, and therefore, capable of funding and support from other than governmental sources. I am convinced that we are capable of independence. I am also convinced that advocacy is an expression/extension of one's self worth. In this field, so many librarians feel that they are catching the crumbs from the banquet table, and that their potential is never fulfilled, because they are not sure that they will be employed in the next few months, that they have a difficult time fighting a negative self-perception as a result of constant abuse by their parent organizations. Because so many rely on federal dollars, and soft money, it is very hard for them to consider themselves advocates. I suppose this will change as the government provides less and less, as will happen in aging information. In this sense, it will be a good change, that is, if aging information can survive with federal monies."

Political and Societal Pressures

"I see a continuing movement toward advocacy as a specialization, a full-time, and occasionally paid activity. However, advocacy as an elemental aspect of basic political processes will continue, although it is increasingly difficult for the part-time volunteer to compete effectively. Older persons will become increasingly effective in advocacy in their own behalf."

"I'm not too optimistic about the future of the information/library profession in advocacy. Somehow, I don't think that the established professionals can go too far in serving and sanctioning groups which may very well threaten that profession's existence...considering the resources of advocacy groups. There are no dollars available to support any specialists. This means that information specialists will, in all likelihood, need to work without professional sanction, and without reasonable compensation and job security."

"...advocacy can be a 'dirty' word from the political standpoint. I worry about the conflicts of public supported institutions in standing up for the 'underdog'. It is a vicious circle."

"The library has long since passed the points of neutrality and passivity on social issues. We must get involved, even if it means annoying some and disturbing others. Advocacy is important, but must be used with judicious restraint and intelligence."

"In terms of intervention in system,...we need some who do it and some who don't."

Political and Societal Pressures

"...without advocacy, librarianship will disappear as a relevant helping profession."

"The critical question that will determine the future is whether library/information practitioners will be able to match their skills with insights and attitudes."

Last Words

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions

Information and Referral (from United Way and Alliance of Information and Referral Services)

- Active process of linking a person with a need or problem with a service which will meet the need or solve the problem. The link between the person and the service is made up of information. It is because the success or failure of the information link depends on communication involving specific individuals in specific problem situations, that we emphasize that information and referral is a process and not a product.

Advocacy

- Action taken by or for the powerless to restore to them a measure of control (power) over their own human condition.
  - work on behalf of older people for services and information that are now non-existent or unavailable to them

34

35

- planning and acting for the primary goal of social change for the elderly

Individual or Case Advocacy

- Enabling individuals or groups to recognize their own needs and to make better choices.

Cause Advocacy

- Support of controversial social issues, usually a matter of personal choice or beliefs.

Issue-Oriented Information

- Information about some aspect of a problem of interest to a community group

-awareness information
-goal/outcome information
-response information
-operational information
-resource information

Advocacy Roles - Traditional

Three Basic Types of Programs and Services:

1. Extension Services
   - A. Bookmobiles
   - B. Books by mail
   - C. Community involvement, i.e. advisory committees, boards, etc.
   - D. Hospital, nursing home, and shut-in services
   - *E. Information and referral

2. Special Materials
   - A. Directories of services
   - B. Large print
   - C. Talking books

3. Group Programs
   - A. Book reviews
   - B. Crafts
   - C. Instruction in basic living skills and knowledge of rights and benefits
   - D. Literacy and adult education

*Negative aspects of providing information and referral, by itself, without further action on the part of the librarian/information specialist:

1. Information in resource file may be inaccurate

2. Person may change his/her mind about need for an agency's services

3. Agency's policy may be too restrictive or personnel inadequately trained or uncaring

Advocacy Roles - Present and Future

1. Information Provision
   - A. Prepare position papers for legislators to use in developing aging policy
   - B. Train community in information acquisition
   - C. Develop public affairs knowledge on consumer issues through information publications/fact sheets
   - D. Distribute information on conditions that exist and how to exert influence
   - E. Provide selective dissemination of information
   - F. Develop networking systems

2. Community Activism
   - A. Act as inter-disciplinary mediator among the array of social agencies and organizations

B. Reduce negative stereotypes and ageism
C. Subscribe to and support established advocacy groups
D. Protect individual and group rights through development and participation in ombudsman programs, lobbying, and supportive services
E. Facilitate power and decision-making
F. Assist with planning and evaluating advocacy
G. Act as a consumer complaint and advocacy service and provide feedback to government

Do Be	Dont' Be
Proposer	Agressor
Gate-keeper	Blocker
Clarifier	Distractor
Harmonizer	Placator
Summarizer	Dominator

National Advocacy Organizations

- American Association of Retired Persons/National Retired Teachers Association (AARP/NRTA)
  - Action for Independent Maturiy (AIM)
- Federal Council for the Aged
- Gray Panthers
- National Association of Retired Federal Employees
- National Council of Senior Citizens
- National Council on the Aging
  - National Institute on Industrial Gerontology
- National Organization for Women (NOW)
  - Special Task Force